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ABSTRACT

This thesis describes a study that engaged 2 sections of English Composition I, 50 randomly selected students at Union County College during the fall semester of 1995. The goal of the study was to determine if in this sample population there was a positive correlation between self-concept and writing ability. The variables of the New Jersey College Basic Skills Placement Test, the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory, and the course writing grade were analyzed to determine the correlation between self-esteem and writing ability. Results of the study supported the hypothesis that students' self-esteem levels do not show a significant correlation with proficiency level of writing. Given the negative results of this study, further research could include investigation into other factors responsible for the generally low levels of writing proficiency seen by so many freshmen community college students. Although entities outside the educational system, economic indicators, home environment, social class, or ethnic membership often have been considered as the rationale for poor performance, studies into the affective domain may shed light on the problem. While this study's negligible correlation between self-esteem and writing ability challenges any significant connection, it might be helpful if teachers were given guidance regarding their own behaviors and attitudes which can enhance achievement. As well, teachers should develop greater understanding and willingness to seek, encourage, and appreciate their student's efforts. (Contains 2 tables of data, a section on related literature, and 37 references.) (Author/TB)

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Self-Esteem and Writing Achievement

by

Joan Rosalsky Grodnick

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In partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Master of Arts
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Abstract

This study engaged two sections of English Composition I, fifty randomly selected students at Union County College during the fall semester of 1995. The goal of the study was to determine if in this sample population there is a positive correlation between self-concept and writing ability.

The variables of the New Jersey College Basic Skills Placement Test, the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory, and the course writing grade were analyzed to determine the correlation between self-esteem and writing ability. The results of the study supported the hypothesis that students' self-esteem levels do not show a significant correlation with proficiency level of writing.

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To Herb, for his patience, tolerance, and concern I dedicate this paper.

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Quite unfortunate, but a fact nevertheless, is the statistic that 85% of entering freshmen at Union County College require at least one remedial course and 48% require remedial writing according to the Director of Academic Placement and Testing of the College. Educators and parties interested in the youth of the 1990's must concern themselves with the causative factors of such a phenomenon.

One avenue to pursue to uncover the root of the problem is the possibility of a connection between self concept and writing, in fact all academic achievement. Does heightened self-esteem lessen the anxiety associated with writing and lead to higher levels of achievement? What enhances esteem? What intervention activities can and should be incorporated into the curriculum to remedy the situation.

Self-awareness is a basic human condition that emerges during the first few months of life. Gradually the concept develops as the child becomes aware of familial significant others who shape the perception of the child's value as a human being and the child's abilities (Purkey, 1970).

Maron (1980) defines self-concept as the totality of beliefs and attitudes children possess in relation to themselves and which determine to a great extent the level of the child's achievement, ability to love, sense of self-worth, in short a child's ability to be a thinking,

loving, contributing member of society.

Coopersmith (1967) suggests that children who experience parental warmth, respectful treatment, and clearly defined limits tend to have positive self-esteem. Those who think ill of themselves, feel inadequate, unloved, unworthy suffer from low self-esteem. In fact, the child's sense of self is crippled (Purkey, 1970).

Children arrive at school with defined perceptions which are then continuously tailored by significant others in the academic environment (Harris & Sipay, 1985).

There is an abundance of research exploring self-concept as a single entity referred to as a global self-concept. However, recent theories portray self-concept as a multifaceted construct, a collection of beliefs about oneself arranged in a hierarchical structure, with general self-concept at the pinnacle of the hierarchy. In fact, Quant and Selznick (1984) conclude that there is a threefold division of perception of self which includes the view of self compared to others (self-perception); the view of how others see one (self-other perception); and the view of how one wishes to be seen (self-ideal).

Shavelson and Bolus (1980) conducted a study of 99 middle class junior high school students in three subject matter areas: Math, Science and English, assessing levels of self-concept. Their findings indicate that general self-concept is distinct but correlated with academic

self-concept. They also concluded that self-concept can be distinguished from academic achievement and that self-concept occupies a position of causal predominance over achievement.

Purkey (1970) indicates that the best evidence suggests there is a continuous interaction between self-concept and academic achievement, that each directly influences the other, is not gender specific and holds true regardless of level of intelligence. The best evidence available indicates that there is a strong reciprocal relationship between self-concept and academic achievement and therefore, there is reason to assume that enhancing self-concept is a vital influence in improving academic performance.

In a review of their study, Beane, Lyska, and Ludewig (1981) point out that as students move upward through the grades, self-esteem is increasingly described in relation to the school experience and the "self within the institution." As they progress through the grades, students' self-concept and academic satisfaction appear to decline. This implies that schools have the responsibility to enhance the development of individuals beyond the acquisition of facts. In effect, this confirms what Purkey and others have concluded that self-esteem and academic achievement must go hand-in-hand; the immediate task to be mastered must be within the grasp of the learner, a situation which only careful teacher planning

can ensure.

Baxter (1987) maintains that when students have difficulty writing, it is often because they are apathetic, afraid of failure, or have poor self-esteem which can interfere with their ability to produce work comparable with their capabilities. A student-centered environment in the classroom and use of concrete materials and problems can help students build a sense of self-worth. Setting one or two tangible goals for each paper can reduce student anxiety about producing a "perfect" paper, and numerous drafts can let them achieve one goal at a time.

Collins (1991) analyzes the effects of eight reading and writing lessons designed to increase adolescent thinking ability. The conclusions indicate that the lessons increased thinking abilities and scholastic achievement of middle school students and positively affected students' self-esteem and communication skills.

Short, intensive technical writing classes have been found to have a very positive effect on adult personality, especially in the area of self-esteem. Over the course of several years, groups of high school educated adult learners who entered college after being out of school for years were found to have their anxieties about reentering school alleviated after they had completed short courses in technical writing. Task oriented technical writing assignments were found to have a positive effect of a significant increase in self-confidence (Stibravy &

Muller, 1988).

Howgate (1982) acknowledges that the process approach to writing instruction; that is, carrying a project through from prewriting to publication, is a valuable technique for enhancing self-esteem. Process procedures will build student confidence and subsequently improve student writing.

Growth in writing skills is an objective of using the writing workshop approach with students of any ability. Growth in self-esteem was a by-product of the growth in writing skills in a nine-month program of specific workshop instruction documented by Lewis (1992). Lewis' observation documents how one teacher used teaching techniques such as giving praise and appropriate commenting in a writer's workshop classroom environment achieving the end result of self-esteem enhancement.

According to Glazer (1991) four strategies help children build their self-esteem in academic subjects: direct praise, redirected questions, contracts or guides for learning and use of only success-proof materials.

Therefore, research and anecdotal evidence indicate that students harbor negative feelings about the writing experience. It has been concluded that part of their aversion to exposing their ideas for perusal and examination stems from feelings of low self-esteem and unworthiness.

Thus, it would appear to be within a caring teacher's

power to promote growth in a wide range of academic areas by structuring the classroom experience to enhance students' self-perceptions.

Hypothesis

To provide more evidence on this topic, the following study was initiated. It was hypothesized that students' self-esteem levels do not show a significant correlation with proficiency level in writing.

Procedures

After admission to Union County College, but before enrollment in specific classes, students must complete placement testing in the form of the New Jersey College Basic Skills Placement Test (NJCBSPT). Part of the test evaluates proficiency in the area of academic writing skills by means of a 35 item multiple choice test of Sentence Sense and a twenty minute holistically scored essay. The Sentence Sense raw score range is 00-35 which equates to gradations of a scaled score from 135-179, with 163 as the demarcation score between placement in a remediation or credit writing course. The essay score is achieved by the addition of two evaluations based upon the reading of typical essays called range finders and which equate with numerical evaluations within a range of 00-12. A score below seven is not passing; a score of seven indicates an advisor's determination governs placement; a score between eight and twelve indicates attainment of certain levels of proficiency which can be equated in the

following manner: 8=C, 9=C+, 10=B, 11=B+, 12=A.

The placement in appropriate writing courses is determined most accurately by using a composition score which combines the two scores through the utilization of a formula which gives equal weight to the Sentence Sense and Essay Scores: (0.8898X Sentence Sense Score) + (3.4391X Essay Score). Since the Essay range is 00-12 and the raw Sentence Sense range is 00-35, there is no additional weight given to the essay score. The formula for conversion to a scale score is: (Raw composition x A Parameter) + (B Parameter). For the year 1995, A Parameter was 0.9417 and B parameter was 119.7045. Since 1981, the minimum scores on the NJCBSPT to avoid remedial/developmental coursework and, therefore, to assure placement in English 101, English Composition I have been: Sentence Sense-161, Essay-7, Composition-163. Fifty students, two sections of English Composition I, randomly selected, were designated the test sample. The scores attained by these students in the NJCBSPT are provided to the English Composition I professors and are used in this study as the pretest scores.

During the semester the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory, Adult form, was administered to the test group. This form consists of 25 items constructed to determine a general assessment of high, medium, or low self-esteem. A total raw score is computed by multiplying the sum of the number of self-esteem items answered correctly by four

with a possible maximum Total Self Score of 100. Guidelines for level determination indicate that high scores correspond to high self esteem; position in the upper quartile is generally indicative of high self-esteem. It follows, therefore, that scores in the lower quartile are indicative of low self-esteem and those in the enter quartile range indicate medium self-esteem. In this study these scores are designated CSEI (Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory).

Throughout the fifteen week semester the students in the test group engaged in numerous writing opportunities both informal and formal. Particularly, emphasis was placed upon the formal writing experience which consisted of five essays typifying the narrative, descriptive, expository, and persuasive genre which were sequentially submitted and holistically scored. Essays were developed in a 2-3 week process encompassing individual prewriting invention techniques, outlining , drafting, group/peer reading and critiques, revisions, final drafts which was accompanied by reading and analysis of essays representing the particular genre the students were creating. Evaluation of the formal essays was based upon consideration of attainment of a degree of proficiency in the areas of content, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, and mechanics or standard writing conventions.

At the conclusion of the semester, a 20 minute

grade for the semester. For the purpose of this study, the formal essay grades and the final departmental evaluation were used as equal components of the course writing grade (CWG). The results of the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory and the Course Writing Grade were analyzed using Pearson's r.

Results

In comparing writing ability and self-esteem, the variables of New Jersey College Basic Skills Test (pretest), the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (CSEI) and the course writing grade (CWG) were used.

Means, standard deviation, and correlation between the variables of NJCBST and CSEI are presented in Table I. As

Table I

Mean, Standard Deviation, and Correlation between Pretest and Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory

	M	SD	r
Pretest	167.83	5.61	.06
CSEI	62.69	21.27	

shown in the table, the level of self-esteem of the sample and their writing ability showed a low positive correlation of .06. The means for the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory was 62.69 out of a possible 100 raw score points with a standard deviation of 21.27. The mean of the pretest was 167.83 out of a possible 179 scaled

score with a standard deviation of 5.61.

Table II presents the means, standard deviations, and correlations between the variables of Course Writing Grades and Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory.

Table II

Mean, Standard Deviation, and Correlation between Course Writing Grade and Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory

	M	SD	r
CWG	78.17	5.52	-.13
CSEI	62.69	21.27	

As shown in the table, the correlation between these two variables of interest showed a correlation of -.13. The mean of the CWG was 78.17 out of 100 possible points with a standard deviation of 5.52.

Both correlations are negligible and neither indicate any significance.

Conclusions

The results of this study indicate that the level of self-esteem possessed by fifty randomly selected students in a college level English Composition I class did not impact significantly on the writing proficiency level as assessed by the New Jersey College Basic Skills Test and the course writing grade. A high general self-concept is shown not to be a valid indicator of a high level of writing ability. The converse was also

shown to be true, namely that a low self concept was not a valid indicator of a low level of writing proficiency.

The null hypothesis that students' self-esteem levels would not show a significant correlation with proficiency level in writing is accepted.

Since the negative evidence from this study for a commonality between self concept and writing ability is evident, further study could include investigation into other factors responsible for the generally low levels of writing proficiency seen in so many freshmen community college students. Although entities outside the educational system, economic indicators, home environment, social class, or ethnic membership often have been considered as the rationale for poor performance, studies into the affective domain might shed light on the problem.

While this study's negligible correlation between self-esteem and writing ability challenges any significant connection, it might be helpful if teachers were given guidance regarding their own behaviors and attitudes which can enhance achievement. As well, teachers should develop greater understanding and willingness to seek, encourage, and appreciate their students' efforts. Programs to enhance teachers' abilities to positively interact with students, to individualize and utilize a wider variety of teaching methods, to invite peer collaborative assistance, might positively impact on student achievement from primary grades on through the college experience. A

longitudinal study of teachers who have participated in such human relations self-concept enhancing programs to ascertain the long term effects of self-concept building strategies would be in order.

Self-Esteem and Achievement:

Related Literature

For decades researchers have explored the relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement. From the very earliest interactions within the family through school years to adulthood, the impact of self-concept on achievement has been analyzed and evaluated. Evidence abounds which demonstrate both positive and negative correlations between the two. In addition, much research has been presented related to interventional techniques which enhance both self-concept and academic achievement.

According to the self-concept theory of Harris and Sipay (1985), children who feel secure, confident and self-reliant read well, while poor readers demonstrate negative feelings of self-worth. The cultivation of the feelings of self-confidence and adequacy is very much dependent upon the influence of the significant other, whether parent or teacher, on the child as recognized by Maslow (1954) more than 40 decades ago.

Revicki (1982) measured the reciprocal effect of self-concept and achievement using the Self Observation Scales and the Stanford Achievement Test. The results indicated that reading achievement was positively associated with self-concept. A similar correlation was indicated by a study of 23 seventh-grade students (Mufson, Cooper, and Hall, 1989) in which it was indicated that underachieving students have less self-confidence, an integral factor of lowered self-esteem and failed to

expend the efforts necessary to become achievers.

A study by Kugle and Clements (1981) in which they administered the Piers-Harris Self-Concept Scale and the Dickstein Self-Esteem Inventory to fifth and seventh graders showed that both level and stability of self-esteem were positively related to academic achievement.

Rogers, Smith and Coleman (1978) suggest that the relationship between self-concept and academic achievement is best understood within the context of the student's social environment. The importance of academic achievement for self-concept lies not in the absolute level of achievement, but in the student's perception of how his/her level of achievement compares with that of his/her peers. Similarly, the research of Mittman and Lash (1988) found that students' perceptions of their academic performance compared to their peers are important determinants of their academic achievement and motivation. Additionally, they presented evidence to suggest that teacher expectation, as demonstrated by teacher cues, also affected students' perceptions of their own academic standing. Such results emphasize the necessity of sensitizing teachers to methods of instruction which might produce negative self-image among students.

Purkey (1970) presents many studies which indicate that students' poor school performances are attributable to perceptions of low capability or to irrelevance of the tasks to the students' lives rather than because of low

intelligence, poor physical condition, low socio-economic status or even culture. Purkey proposes that the low self-perception may also restrict participation in extra-curricular programs which has been found to promote self-concept.

The theory of building academic self-concept as differentiated from global self-concept was explored by Sanacore (1975). Results indicated that teachers must develop an observational attitude in regard to their students' behaviors, must confer with parents and former teachers, and administer tests of self-concept. This will provide the insight necessary to identify students with low levels of self-esteem in order to provide them with material suitable to their levels and direct them toward attainable goals that will give them opportunities for success--an academic self-concept enhancing experience.

Mboya (1989) designed a study to assess whether the relationship between self-concept of academic ability and academic achievement correlated more strongly than the relationship between global self-concept and academic achievement among high school students. Three tests were given: the California Achievement Test to measure academic achievement; the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory to measure global self-esteem; and the Self-Concept of Academic Ability Scale to measure self-evaluation of academic ability. The results indicated a high correlation between the self-concept of academic

ability and academic achievement, but the global self-concept measure yielded low positive correlation with academic achievement. This would suggest that the impact of self-concept on academic achievement may not be generalized, but rather may be a function of a specific area of self-concept. If this is true, intervention strategies designed to raise academic achievement would be more likely to succeed if they were to focus on enhancement of academic self-concept rather than global self-concept.

According to Bloom (1980), how well a student does in a particular area depends on his/her self-concept in that area and is influenced in one of two ways. The first way is three hidden curriculum features such as class climate, teacher expectations, peer interchange, etc. The second way is by the influence of prior achievement. Both may help or hinder the present situation. The removal of negative curriculum features may positively impact on achievement by imparting a feeling of belonging and acceptance.

Licht, Stader, and Sweenson (1989) used a sample population of 192 fifth graders to study gender specific academic self-concept. It was found that girls viewed themselves as less smart in social studies and science, not in math or reading, than did boys. Significantly, teachers were perceived to interact more frequently with boys in social studies and science.

Bozym (1976) conducted a study of the effects on student performance when teacher understanding of cognitive-affective aspects of student learning was heightened. An experimental group of 137 first through sixth grade students were taught by teachers trained in cognitive-affective understanding while a similar control group were in the classes of teachers who were not similarly trained. Results indicated that the experimental group's self-concept, reading and math achievement and attitude toward school significantly increased. Omitted from the study, however, was the consideration of the long term effects of such training on the students as they progress through school.

The role of the affective status of students was explored by Parish and Parish (1989) in their study of school programs and studies devoted to exploring the short and long-term school achievement of underachieving and unmotivated students. Programs were designed to provide enrichment experiences, i.e. field trips, social activities, advanced placement courses, based upon the premise of expectation of success. Interestingly underachievement was reversed. Parish and Parish detailed a 1985 study of Limbreck, McNaughton and Glynn in which the reading accuracy and comprehension of students in an elementary school cross-aged tutoring program were found to be greater than those of peers of similar ability who were not tutored in like manner. Observations of close

relationships between the tutors and their subjects appears to confirm the very powerful effects of structuring situations and providing personnel who help to satisfy the strong need of all students to feel a sense of belonging and approval. In addition, Parish and Parish reviewed studies which found that low achievers perform better when they are in school with high achievers; class sizes of 27 or fewer are better for low-ability achievers; elementary school teachers who expect success of their students by looking for the positive in them and by building on what they are capable of doing are more effective.

Experimental studies have shown that teaching low achieving students to set proximal goals for themselves enhances their sense of cognitive efficacy, their academic achievement, and their intrinsic interest in the subject matter. Students do not adopt the high academic aspirations imposed on them by either parents or teachers. Clearly, a determinant of students' aspirations is their belief in their academic efficacy. Efforts to foster academic achievement need to do more than simply set demanding standards for students. What is needed is a structuring of academic experiences to enhance the students' sense of academic efficacy (Zimmerman, Bandura, & Martinez-Pons, 1992).

According to Purkey (1970) once students possess a negative self-perception, convincing them otherwise would

be very difficult. General perceptions are quite stable, so continuing, consistent, positive feedback will have more effect than a few random compliments. In order to make a difference in students' self-perceptions, efforts to provide a consistent and continuing series of specific situations in which positive feedback is received and in which students are helped to clarify their conceptions of self and values upon which they base their personal judgment of self esteem must be made.

Most damaging to students' self-esteem is negative labeling such as "remedial reader or writer." Juliebo and Elliot (1985) documented a case study of a student who changed from a bright, enthusiastic learner upon entering school to one with negative self-concepts which isolated him and caused him emotional and educational injury. One teacher's thoughtless and erroneous perception of the student's abilities and resultant negative labeling was internalized by the student who acted out the classification. Subsequent perceptive teaching ensured academic recovery, but remnants of lowered self-esteem persisted.

This situation focuses attention on the fact that attention must be paid to the role of emotion in learning. Students receiving negative messages from their teachers quickly learn to view themselves as incapable of learning. They then develop their own behaviors to cope with their lack of academic success, thus imprisoning themselves in

the failure cycle. These behaviors demonstrate a state of learned helplessness in the face of repeated failure (Licht, 1983).

Strickland and Campbell (1982) imply that the establishment of a positive relationship between self-esteem and reading achievement has significant implications for those who are in a position to effect change. Many studies cited do establish just such a positive relationship and therefore teachers who are in a pivotal position to bring about change, must continually develop ways of fostering positive self-concepts and, thus, academic achievement.

Jerry Dale Jones reported a study in 1981 the purpose of which was to determine if a systematic behavior modification program for teachers had an effect on teachers' verbal classroom interaction and extended to the teachers' students' self-concept. A ten-week human relations program was offered to classroom teachers in Pulaski County, Virginia. The course entailed a variety of skill acquisition that teachers could use in classroom situations to enhance their students' self-concept. The conclusions indicated that the techniques used in the program increased the teachers' sensitivity to their own verbal behaviors, how their behaviors affect classroom climate and individual pupils, and seemed to increase the possibilities for the selection of appropriate and alternative teaching in verbal behaviors. Significantly,

the students of the experimental teachers had more positive self-concept gains supporting the claim that a program in human relations training is a factor in increasing self-concept of students.

Conversely, much of the literature available about college basic writers depicts them as a large homogeneous group. Ignored is the diversity that exists within this population. According to researchers cited by Graff (1992) personality type as measured by the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator is a neglected factor in most composition research that aids in ascertaining and appreciating the diversity and strengths of basic writers. Case study methodology was used to investigate whether a relationship existed between the personality types of 34 basic writers at Ball State University and the writing strategies they used. Scores from pre-and post-good writing questionnaires and process logs, self-evaluations, student journals, student writing, participant-observer's field notes and the teacher-researcher journal enriched and supplemented the MBTI results. As a group the following was observed: (1) most of the students were not highly apprehensive about writing; (2) they were a diverse group with 15 of 16 in MBTI personality types represented; and (3) they displayed a wide variety of writing strategies. These students demonstrated that they were diverse in their attitudes about writing, degree of writing apprehension, their personality types, and their use of

writing strategies. The subjects used strategies that supported their personality preferences, those that coincided though previously unused, and incorporated unpreferred processes into their composing, strategies, demonstrating that personality type apparently played a major role. Of lesser importance was previous experiences, post writing instruction, successes and failures, and attitudes about "English."

Silver and Repa (1993) examined the effect of using word processing on the quality of writing and level of self-esteem of 66 urban high school students beginning English as a second language. The quasi-experimental study was conducted for a period of 13 weeks using a pretest-posttest design. It was hypothesized that the use of word processing would have a greater positive effect on the student writing than traditional pen-and-paper classroom procedures, and would, therefore, have a greater positive effect on their self-esteem. Although there was a significantly greater improvement in the quality of writing of the word-processing group, the expectation of improved self-esteem was not supported.

Renick (1987) studied the relationship between perceptions of intellectual ability, competence at specific academic subjects and global self-worth in 166 learning disabled adolescents attending a private school for LD students. An original self perception profile assessing students' social acceptance, athletic

competence, behavioral conduct, physical appearance, and global self-worth in addition to LD students' perceptions of intellectual ability and competence at reading, spelling/writing, and math was administered. Results for this group indicated: (1) higher perceptions of intellectual ability than perceived competence in each of the academic domains existed; (2) the degree to which the students felt they are intelligent has little relationship to their academic performance; (3) self-worth is correlated more highly with perceived intellectual ability than with academic performance; and (4) perceptions of intelligence and self-worth increase with age while academic performance decreases slightly.

Whereas the proposition inherent in American individualistic social philosophy, that a person's perception of self influences his behavior, the causal direction of this relationship has not been ascertained from cross sectional studies examining the role of self-concept and social roles and social structure variables such as those done by Backman & Secord, 1968; Preiss, 1968; Rosenberg, 1965; Rosenberg & Simmons, 1973; Trowbridge, 1972, and Coopersmith, 1967. Laboratory studies have shown the effects of short term manipulation of self-esteem (Silverman, 1968; Stotland & Zander, 1958) to the contradictory and short-lived, having no independent influence on behavior (Scheirer and Kraut, 1979). Scheirer and Kraut's study reviews the evaluation research

on education intervention programs which have focused on self-concept change and analyzed the evidence according to several self-concept theories: (1) symbolic interaction theory; (2) identification with group theory and (3) internal needs theory. The programs studied encompassed the approximate ages of the participating children from preschoolers, primary grade, junior high school through high school levels. The results indicated "overwhelmingly negative evidence . . . for a causal connection between self-concept and academic achievement." Scheirer and Kraut, therefore, advise "caution among both educators and theorists who have heretofore assumed that enhancing a person's feelings about himself would lead to academic achievements."

Furthermore, according to Rubin, Dorle and Sandidge (1977), the high correlation between improved self-esteem and greater academic achievement as espoused by Brodkover and Purkey, "has nowhere been convincingly demonstrated" and that, in fact, "much of the relationship between self-esteem and educational attainment can best be explained 'as reflecting a common set of prior causes--background, ability, and earlier scholastic success'" (O'Malley & Bachman, 1976).

An interesting corollary provided by the study done by Brookover et al. from 1962 through 1968 was that confidence in one's academic ability is necessary but not sufficient in determining academic success. Helping to

substantiate this corollary, were results that indicated that students who presented low self-concept rarely performed at above average levels, and those who exhibited high self-concepts did not perform at comparable levels. Case in point is a recent international survey described by Schmoker (1990) in which Korean students were premier ranked in mathematics while Americans ranked last. When asked questions regarding their self-perceptions of ability, the Koreans ranked themselves last, while the Americans ranked themselves first.

In spite of the fact that many studies have shown positive correlations between self-concept and school achievement, still others have demonstrated the reverse. Perhaps further investigation will produce a more definitive connection in this relationship and intervention techniques can produce an environment in which a student can achieve success with a minimum of indifference and fear of failure (Melton, 1988).

Self-Esteem and Achievement:

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Appendix

Student Evaluation Scores

Student	NJCBSPT	CSEI	CWG
1	179	68	80
2	164	96	80
3	170	52	80
4	177	100	80
5	170	72	85
6	158	32	80
7	168	44	80
8	163	44	70
9	165	96	85
10	168	28	80
11	175	40	85
12	163	24	90
13	167	60	75
14	166	68	85
15	165	64	80
16	172	60	70
17	160	52	70
18	163	48	70
19	163	100	85
20	169	44	80
21	163	40	80
22	163	76	70
23	173	68	80
24	166	28	80
25	165	68	70
26	163	92	70
27	172	40	80
28	173	56	85
29	161	80	80
30	168	36	80
31	171	56	70
32	162	88	80
33	170	56	80
34	172	64	80
35	171	56	80
36	162	68	70
37	154	60	80
38	177	92	80
39	162	36	85
40	173	80	80
41	162	88	70
42	166	44	70
43	175	92	80
44	177	60	80
45	168	88	70
46	174	32	80
47	172	88	80
48	162	68	70
49	172	72	70
50	174	44	85